

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) An optical disc that is used to store and retrieve digital data, the optical disc comprising:

first and second surfaces having inner and outer peripheries, at least the first surface of the optical disc capable of transmitting light;

an area for storing digital data, the area located between the inner and outer peripheries of the first and second surfaces, the digital data being accessible by shining light through the first surface of the optical disc; and

one or more projections located on at least the first surface of the optical disc, the one or more projections sized and configured to minimize interference with retrieving the digital data stored on the optical disc and to provide a clearance between the first surface of the optical disc and a substantially flat surface when the optical disc is placed on the substantially flat surface with the first surface of the optical disc facing the substantially flat surface.

2. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are located on the first surface of the optical disc between the area for storing digital data and the outer periphery of the optical disc.

3. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are located on the first surface of the optical disc between the area for storing digital data and the inner periphery of the optical disc.

4. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are located on the first surface of the optical disc between the area for storing digital data and the inner and outer peripheries of the optical disc.

5. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are located in the area for storing digital data adjacent to the outer periphery of the optical disc.

6. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are located in predefined non-data areas.

7. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections have heights about less than the optical disc thickness.

8. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections have heights about equal to or less than one half the optical disc thickness.

9. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, wherein the one or more projections are continuous and circumscribe the inner periphery of the optical disc.

10.-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The optical disc of claim 1, further comprising one or more projections located on the second surface of the optical disc, the one or more projections sized and configured to minimize interference with digital data retrieval and to provide clearance between the second surface of the optical disc and a substantially flat surface when

the optical disc is placed on the substantially flat surface with the second surface of the optical disc facing the substantially flat surface.

13. (Original) A system for protecting an optical disc that is used to store and retrieve digital data, the system comprising one or more projections for applying to a surface of an optical disc, the one or more projections sized and configured to minimize interference with digital data retrieval and to provide a clearance between the surface of the optical disc and a substantially flat surface when the optical disc is placed on the substantially flat surface with the surface of the optical disc facing the substantially flat surface.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the one or more projections are continuous and circumscribes an interior periphery of the optical disc.

15. (Original) A method of protecting an optical disc used to store and retrieve digital data, the method comprising:

providing one or more projections on at least a first surface of an optical disc, the one or more projections sized and configured to prevent interference with digital data retrieval and to provide a clearance between the first surface of the optical disc and a substantially flat surface when the optical disc is placed on the substantially flat surface with the first surface of the optical facing the substantially flat surface.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising forming the projections on the first surface of the optical disc by injection molding.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising applying the projections on the first surface of the optical disc by bonding.

18. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising forming the projections on the first surface of the optical disc by hot stamping.

19. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising providing the projections on a second surface of the optical disc.

20. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising forming depressions in a second surface of the optical disc by injection molding.